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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

ON-LINE REVERSE AUCTION
SYSTEM
AND METHOD

Field:

The present invention pertains to on-line auctions, and more particularly, the present invention pertains to reverse auctions where buyers post offers to buy and sellers compete for the buyers' business.

Background:

Respond.com, Inc. operates an on-line reverse transaction system on the Internet. This system receives offers to buy items from buyers. The system forwards the offer to a pool of sellers. The sellers generate offer-responses and use the system to contact the buyer with the offer-responses. Contact between the sellers and a buyer is initially accomplished through the system. This reverse transaction format enables buyers to sift through the seller responses and choose the most appropriate seller.

One drawback of the Respond.com, Inc. system is that the back end of the system is closed. Sellers are normally not aware of what other sellers are presenting to the buyers. Competition between sellers is reduced. What is desired is a way of increasing competition between sellers to provide buyers with an optimal forum for buying goods and services.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention includes a system for operating a reverse auction on a communications network. The system includes an open back end that displays offers and offer-responses to all users. The system also includes features that preserve buyer anonymity. These features include anonymous on-line chat and anonymous e-mail forwarding.

The system operates on a communications network accessible by buyers and sellers, such as the Internet. A host server communicates with communications network via a web site for posting offers to buy items and for posting offer-responses to the communications network. The host server includes a buyer interface accessible by buyers for receiving offers to buy items. The host server receives offers to buy items via the buyer interface and posts the offers to buy items to the network.

1 The host server includes a seller interface accessible by sellers. The seller
2 interface receives offer-responses. The offer-responses are responsive to the offers to buy
3 items. The host server posts the offer-responses to the network to enable competitive
4 bidding between sellers.

5 The system includes a user database stored on the host server to store user contact
6 information and an e-mail server. The user contact information includes a user e-mail
7 address associated with each user.

8 The e-mail server communicates with the users, the host server and the user
9 database. The e-mail server receives queries from buyers and anonymously forwards the
10 queries to sellers. Query-responses from the sellers are received and forwarded to the
11 buyer. The system preserves buyer anonymity by keeping buyer's contact information
12 confidential.

13
14 Brief Description of the Drawing:

15 FIG. 1 is a diagram of a system in accordance with the present invention.

16 FIG. 2 is a flow diagram showing a method employed by the system of FIG. 1.

17 FIG. 3 is a diagram of the system of FIG. 1 having multiple sellers.

18 FIG. 4 is a flow diagram of a reverse auction method employed by the system of
19 FIG. 3.

20 FIG. 4(a) is a sample listing form for enabling a buyer to communicate an offer to
21 buy.

22 FIG. 5 is a diagram of the system of FIG. 1 with a negotiation room server to
23 facilitate chat between a buyer and a seller.

24 FIG. 6 is a flow diagram of a method of employing the system of FIG. 5.

25
26 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

27 FIG. 1 shows a system in accordance with the present invention, generally
28 designated with the reference numeral 10. The system 10 includes a host server, a
29 database 14, an e-mail server 16, a buyer 18 and a seller 20. The system 10 may be
30 employed to preserve buyer anonymity in online transactions such as reverse transactions,

1 online auctions and reverse online auctions.

2 The term "item" is understood to include goods and services. The term "buyer(s)"
3 is defined as including prospective buyers. The term "seller(s)" is defined as including
4 prospective sellers. Buyers 18 and sellers 20 deal in items.

5 The system 10 is particularly useful for reverse transactions and reverse auctions.
6 A reverse transaction as defined herein is a transaction, which is initiated by a buyer in
7 the form of an offer to buy an item. This offer to buy is directed to the general public, or
8 to a predefined group of sellers.

9 For the purposes of the present invention, seller responses to the buyer's offer to
10 buy are termed "offer-responses". Each offer and each offer-response is published to the
11 general public, or to a predefined group such as a group of registered system 10 users.

12 A reverse auction is a reverse transaction where sellers are enabled to publicly
13 respond to a buyer's offer to buy. According to reverse auction principals, posted offer-
14 response typically includes a price term that is displayed publicly. The price term is
15 normally modifiable by the seller 20. Since the offer-responses are posted, a seller 20
16 may view other seller's offer-responses and formulate an offer-response, or modify an
17 existing offer-response that is priced competitively with other seller's offer-responses.
18 Reverse auctions facilitate competition between sellers 20 and thereby provide the buyer
19 18 with favorable transaction opportunities.

20 The system 10 electronically communicates with the communications network 22.
21 The communications network 22 enables access by numerous buyers 18 and sellers 20.
22 Preferably, the communications network 22 is the Internet. According to an alternate
23 aspect of the invention, the communications network 22 is a closed network such as an
24 intranet. It can be appreciated that any communication network capable of
25 communicating text, voice and/or images can be used in accordance with the present
26 invention.

27 The host server 12 electronically communicates with the communications
28 network. The host server 12 receives offers to buy from at least one buyer 18 and posts
29 the offer to buy to the communications network. The host server 12 then receives at least
30 one offer-response that is responsive to the buyer's 18 offer to buy. The host server 12

1 publicly posts the offers to buy and the offer-responses to the communications network to
2 facilitate competitive bidding between sellers. Preferably the host server is a web-based
3 server that posts a conventional web page for displaying the offers to buy, and the offer-
4 responses.

5 The system 10 includes the database 14 stored on the host server 12 to store user
6 ID's, pass codes and data associated with each user. The database 14 enables the host 12
7 to verify user ID's and pass codes of buyers and sellers.

8 User registration is a prerequisite to posting offers to buy and offer-responses on the host
9 12. The host verifies user ID's and pass-codes, permitting only registered users to post
10 offers and offer-responses.

11 The system 10 enables anonymous communication between users. The user ID's
12 employed by the host 12 and stored on the database typically do not include user data.
13 Anonymous communication is accomplished by using the user ID's for posting offers and
14 offer-responses. It can be appreciated that while the system 10 operates to preserve user
15 anonymity, a user may optionally waive anonymity by sharing his/her e-mail address or
16 other contact information with other users. Accordingly, the user e-mail address, name
17 and other contact information are confidentially stored on the host server 12 via the
18 database 14 and are not shared by the host server 12.

19 E-mail communications between users are routed through the system 10 via the
20 host server 12 and the e-mail server 16. According to one aspect of the invention, the e-
21 mail server 16 communicates with the host server 16 and user database 14 for facilitating
22 anonymous communication between a buyer 18 and a seller 20.

23 The e-mail server 16 accesses the database 14 to verify user ID's and to associate
24 an e-mail address with each user ID. The e-mail server 16 routs e-mails between users
25 using the user IDs. The e-mail server 16 has an e-mail address filter for removing e-mail
26 addresses from routed e-mail correspondences. Accordingly, the e-mail server functions
27 as an anonymous e-mail forwarder.

28 Anonymous e-mail forwarding prevents systematic disclosure of buyer contact
29 information, including buyer e-mail address. Buyer anonymity is strongly desired to
30 prevent overzealous sellers from spamming curious buyers. The concept of combining an

1 anonymous e-mail forwarder in combination with a system for selling items is one of the
2 novel features of the present invention.

3 The hardware configuration of a host server and an e-mail server results in the
4 host server receiving communications (e.g. e-mail) initiated by users viewing web pages
5 page hosted by the host server. Such communications are verified and forwarded via the
6 e-mail server as appropriate. It can be appreciated, however, that the hardware
7 configuration can be combined into a single machine, or into multiple machines.

8 E-mail is defined broadly to include all electronic communications regardless of
9 format. For example, e-mail can include sound attachments, video attachments, and even
10 sound and video streams with compression. A user ID may be a digitally signed ID. The
11 user's e-mail address is a generic term that is understood to include any electronic
12 address.

13 A buyer does not always have sufficient information to accept or reject an offer-
14 response. Accordingly, the present invention provides for two easy ways to anonymously
15 enable the buyer to query the seller. One way is by anonymous e-mail. Another way is
16 by anonymous chat.

17 Offers to buy and offer-responses are posted on the host with user ID's.
18 According to one aspect of the invention, the e-mail server 16 is capable of receiving a
19 query-response from the seller. Upon receipt of a query-response, the e-mail server 16
20 accesses the database 14 to associate the query-response with a buyer 18 and then
21 forwards the query-response to the associated buyer 18.

22 Preferably, the e-mail server 16 includes an offensive term filter to prevent the e-
23 mail server 16 from forwarding e-mail with offensive terms. The host server 12 includes
24 an offensive term filter to prevent the host server 12 from posting offensive terms in the
25 offers to buy and the offer-responses.

26 FIG. 2 shows the method 24 employed by the system of FIG. 1. The method 24
27 includes the step 26 of posting an offer to buy on the host server, the step 28 of accessing
28 the offer to buy, the step 30 of posting an offer-response on the host, the step 32 of
29 anonymously querying the seller for information pertaining to the offer-response, the step
30 34 of receiving a query-response and the step 36 of forwarding the query-response to a

1 buyer.

2 In the step 28, a seller 20 accesses the offer to buy and evaluates his ability to
3 satisfy the buyer 18. In the step 30, the seller 20 posts an offer-response corresponding to
4 the offer to buy on the host server. In the step 32, the buyer anonymously queries the
5 seller for information pertaining to the seller's offer-response. The query is typically via
6 e-mail. The seller responds to the query in the form a query-response addressed to the
7 buyer's user ID. In step 34, the server receives the query response from the seller. The e-
8 mail server identifies the buyer user ID from the query response. The e-mail server
9 associates the user ID with a buyer e-mail address. In step 36, the e-mail server forwards
10 the query-response to the buyer, or provides notification to the buyer that the query-
11 response has been received.

12 It can be appreciated that although e-mail is preferred, when e-mail is not
13 available snail mail, fax, or other means may be employed to communicate the query
14 response to the buyer.

15 FIG. 3 shows a system with multiple sellers for a reverse auction. The 40
16 includes a first seller 42, a second seller 44 and an n^{th} seller 46. The first seller 42, the
17 second seller 44 and the n^{th} seller 46 each respond an offer to buy initiated by the buyer
18 18. Accordingly, when the buyer posts an offer to buy to the communications network
19 via the host server 12, the server 12 enables sellers to view the offer to buy. The host
20 server 12 enables the sellers 42, 44 and to post offer-responses to the server 12, where the
21 posted offer-responses are posted to the network.

22 According to one aspect of the invention, the host server 12 limits each seller to
23 one offer-response. According to another aspect of the invention, the host 12 permits a
24 seller to post multiple offer-responses. Multiple offer-responses by the same seller is
25 desirable when, for example, the seller is a car dealer and has many cars that fall within
26 the scope of the buyer's offer to buy.

27 The offer-responses posted by the sellers 42, 44 and 46 to the network via the host
28 server 12 are viewable by each of the multiple sellers 42, 44 and 46, the buyer 18 and by
29 other network users.

30 Offer-responses are modifiable. Modifying offer-responses enables sellers to

1 increase quantities and decrease prices. Preferably, the server 12 disables the seller's
2 ability to decrease quantity and increase price. This aspect of the invention better assures
3 that prices decline during the reverse auctions. The host server 12 is optimized to
4 virtually instantaneously post offer and offer-response modifications to the network.
5 Instantaneously posting offer-response facilitates competition between sellers. According
6 to one aspect of the invention, sellers 42, 44 and 46 are automatically notified when any
7 offer-response is added or modified so that a reverse auction rapidly evolves.

8 FIG. 4 shows a method 50 employed by the system of FIG. 3. The method
9 includes the steps of method 24 (FIG. 2) and the step 52 of deciding whether a response is
10 satisfactory and the step 54 of modifying the offer response. The step 56 includes the
11 buyer accessing the multiple offer-responses 30.

12 In step 58 the seller blindly responds to the buyer's query with a query-response
13 and the buyer receives the seller's query-response (step 34 of FIG. 2). The buyer
14 evaluates the offer-responses and the query responses to complete the step 60 of
15 consummating a transaction with one or more of the sellers.

16 A buyer posts an offer to buy on the host server in step 26. This offer to buy is
17 posted on a web page and is accessed by three sellers in steps 28a, 28b and 28c. Each
18 seller posts an offer-response to the network via the server hosted web page in steps 30a,
19 30b, and 30c. Each seller checks the web page to view competing offers and determines
20 if his offer-response is satisfactory in steps 52a, 52b and 52c. If the seller's offer-
21 response is unsatisfactory, e.g. does not result in consummation of a transaction, then
22 seller may choose to modify his/her offer-response 54a, 54b, and 54c. The buyer
23 accesses the multiple offer-responses, step 56. In step 60, the buyer consummates a
24 transaction with one or more of the sellers in step 60. Alternatively, in steps 32a and 32b,
25 the buyer may anonymously query any of the sellers.

26 There are instances where the buyer may not have enough information to decide
27 whether or not to consummate a transaction, step 60. Accordingly, the buyer
28 anonymously queries the first and second seller 32a and 32b. Each seller blindly (i.e.
29 without knowing the buyer email address or contact information) responds to the buyer's

1 query 58a and 58b. The seller responses are communicated via e-mail according to one
2 aspect of the invention.

3 According to an alternate aspect of the invention, the buyer's queries and the
4 seller's responses are posted to the network via the host server web page.

5 Whether the queries, and responses are delivered via the web page, or e-mail, the
6 buyer will ideally have sufficient information to consummate a transaction, step 60. A
7 transaction may be consummated with any one, or more, of the sellers. Optionally, the
8 buyer may opt out of any further communication with the sellers. It can be appreciated
9 that the buyer remains anonymous to each of the sellers, unless the buyer decides to
10 consummate a transaction, step 60. In step 60, the seller typically needs buyer payment
11 information and shipping address.

12 FIG. 4(a) shows the buyer offer interface posted by the host server. The buyer
13 offer interface includes a listing form 61 for posting offers to buy on the host server. The
14 listing form includes a pricing criteria toggle 62 having at least three offer pricing criteria
15 options, including a first option 64 for accepting all offers; a second option 66 for
16 allowing all offers below a certain value; and a third option 68 for allowing only the
17 lowest offer. The toggle 62 enables a buyer to instruct the host server to selectively filter
18 offer-responses based on desired pricing criteria. When the host receives offer-responses
19 that meet the price criteria from the listing form 61, the host server posts the filtered
20 offer-responses to the network.

21 FIG. 5 shows a system 70 including the host server 12, the database 14, the e-mail
22 server 16, the buyer 18, the seller 20 and a negotiation room server 70. The negotiation
23 room server 70 is in communication with the host server 12 for enabling anonymous on-
24 line chat between the buyer 18 and the seller 20.

25 Preferably the host server 12 posts a web page interface with a negotiation room
26 toggle. The buyer actuates the toggle to cause the e-mail server to dispatch an instant
27 notification to the seller to indicate that a chat is requested. The negotiation room server
28 simultaneously displays a negotiation interface that is simultaneously accessible by the
29 buyer 18 and the seller 20. The negotiation interface enables buyers to anonymously post
30 queries relating to a particular auctioned items and enables sellers to post query-

1 responses.

2 If the seller 20 does not respond, the e-mail server sends an e-mail notification to
3 the buyer 18 indicating that an appointment to chat should be set. The buyer 18
4 dispatches an anonymous appointment invitation via the negotiation room server 72 and
5 the e-mail server 16 to the seller 20 to make an appointment to chat. The appointment
6 invitation specifies a suggested appointment time.

7 Preferably, the negotiation room interface is simultaneously accessible by a single
8 buyer and a single seller for real-time communications. The negotiation room server 72
9 has an identity filter so that the buyer's identity remains anonymous when the buyer 18
10 uses the negotiation room interface.

11 The negotiation room server 72 includes an offensive term filter to prevent the
12 negotiation room interface from posting offensive terms. The offensive term filter
13 operates in real time to monitor and filter chat between a buyer and seller. This filter
14 identifies and eliminates offensive terms used during the chat and drops (prevents further
15 use by) buyers and sellers that use offensive terms.

16 In Operation

17 The system of the present invention operates a reverse auction having an open
18 back end that reveals buyer offers, and seller offer-responses. Revealing the seller offer-
19 responses to other sellers facilitates competition between sellers. No other on-line
20 system permits reverse auctions with an open back end. The system also preserves buyer
21 anonymity until a transaction is consummated.

22 The system includes a host server having a web-based interface in communication
23 with the communications network. The host server receives and posts offers to buy from
24 buyers and offer-responses from sellers via the web-based interface. Each offer-response
25 is responsive to an offer to buy.

26 The host server posts the offers to buy and the offer-responses to the
27 communications network. A user database stored on the host server stores user ID's and
28 user contact information.

29 The user contact information typically includes an e-mail address. An anonymous
30 e-mail server communicates with the host server and the user database. The e-mail server

1 receives queries form buyers and query-responses from sellers. The e-mail server
2 includes an e-mail address filter. E-mails form buyers typically include the buyer's e-
3 mail address. Upon receipt of an e-mail query from the buyer, the e-mail server filters
4 any e-mail address information form the query before forwarding the query to the seller.

5 The host server is simultaneously accessible by multiple sellers to enable multiple
6 sellers to post multiple offer-responses and to enable multiple sellers to simultaneously
7 review the multiple offer-responses. The host server enables modification of each offer-
8 response to encourage sellers to bid down against each other. The host server is
9 optimized to virtually instantaneously post the modifications, thus creating a real time
10 reverse auction between buyers and sellers.

11 While the foregoing detailed description has described various embodiments of
12 the invention it is to be understood that the above description is illustrative only and not
13 limiting of the disclosed invention. Multiple systems can screen communications in
14 accordance with the present invention. Host servers can function both as e-mail servers
15 and chat servers. Accordingly, the present invention is not limited to a multi-machine
16 system. The present invention can be implemented with a single host machine that
17 provides multiple functions. Accordingly, the invention is to be limited only by the
18 appended claims.

19

1

2

CLAIMS

3 What is claimed is:

4 1. A system for operating a reverse auction on a communications network,
5 comprising:

6 a communications network accessible by buyers and sellers;

7 a host server in electronic communication with the communications network;

8 the host server hosts a web site for posting offers to buy items and for posting
9 offer-responses to the communications network;10 the host server receives offers to buy and posts the offers to buy items to the
11 network;12 the host server receives offer-responses that are responsive to the offers to buy
13 items, the host server posts the offer-responses to the communications network,14 whereby, the posted offers and posted offer-responses are viewable by network
15 users to facilitate competition.

16

17 2. A system for operating a reverse auction as set forth in claim 1 further
18 comprising a user database stored on the host server to store user contact information, the
19 user contact information including a user e-mail address associated with each user; and20 an e-mail server in electronic communication with the host server and user
21 database, the e-mail server being capable of receiving a query from a buyer and
22 anonymously forwarding the query to a seller, and for receiving a query-response from
23 the seller and for forwarding the query-response to the buyer.

24

25 3. A system for operating a reverse auction as set forth in claim 1 further
26 comprising a negotiation room server in communication with the host server for enabling
27 anonymous on-line chat between the buyer and the seller.

28

29 4. A system for operating a reverse auction as set forth in claim 1, wherein the
30 communications network is the Internet.

1

2 5. A system for operating a reverse auction as set forth in claim 1, wherein the server
3 enables modification of offer-responses to facilitate price competition between sellers.

4

5 6. A system for preserving user anonymity during on-line transactions, comprising:
6 a communications network accessible by buyers and sellers;
7 a host server in electronic communication with the communications network, the
8 host server receives and posts offers to buy from buyers and offer-responses from sellers,
9 each offer-response being responsive to an offer to buy, the host server posts the offers to
10 buy and offer-responses to the communications network;

11 a user database stored on the host server to store user contact information, the user
12 contact information including a user e-mail address associated with each user; and

13 an e-mail server in electronic communication with the host server and user
14 database, the e-mail server being capable of receiving a query from a buyer and
15 anonymously forwarding the query to a seller, the e-mail server being capable of
16 receiving a query-response from the seller and for forwarding the query-response to the
17 buyer.

18

19 7. A system as set forth in claim 6, wherein the e-mail server includes an e-
20 mail address filter for filtering buyer e-mail addresses to preserve buyer anonymity.

21

22 8. A system as set forth in claim 6, wherein the host server posts offer-
23 responses to the network and enables access to the posted offer-responses by all users to
24 facilitate competition between sellers.

25

26 9. A system for operating a reverse auction as set forth in claim 6 further
27 comprising a negotiation room server in communication with the host server for enabling
28 anonymous on-line chat between the buyer and the seller.

29

30

- 1 10. A method for operating a reverse auction on a communications network,
2 comprising:
3 posting an offer to buy to a communications network from at least one buyer;
4 posting offer-responses to the communications network from at least one seller,
5 the offer-responses being responsive to the offer to buy; and
6 consummating a transaction.
7
- 8 11. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising enabling the buyer to
9 anonymously query one of the sellers for information pertaining to one of the offer-
10 responses.
11
- 12 12. A method as set forth in claim 11 further comprising enabling the buyer to
13 anonymously query one of the sellers via e-mail for information pertaining to one of the
14 offer-responses.
15
- 16 13. A method as set forth in claim 11 further comprising enabling the buyer to
17 anonymously query one of the sellers via on-line chat for information pertaining to one of
18 the offer-responses.
19
- 20 14. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising modifying an offer-
21 response to enable competitive bidding between posted offer-responses.
22
- 23 15. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising dispatching a
24 notification when an offer-response is received.
25
- 26 16. A method as set forth in claim 14 further comprising dispatching a
27 notification when an offer-response is modified.
28
- 29 17. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising dispatching an e-mail
30 notification when an offer-response is received.

1

2 18. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising communicating an
3 invitation to chat to a seller in response to a particular posted response.

4

5 19. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising initiating chat on a
6 negotiation room server.

7

8 20. A method as set forth in claim 10 further comprising consummating a
9 transaction.

10

11

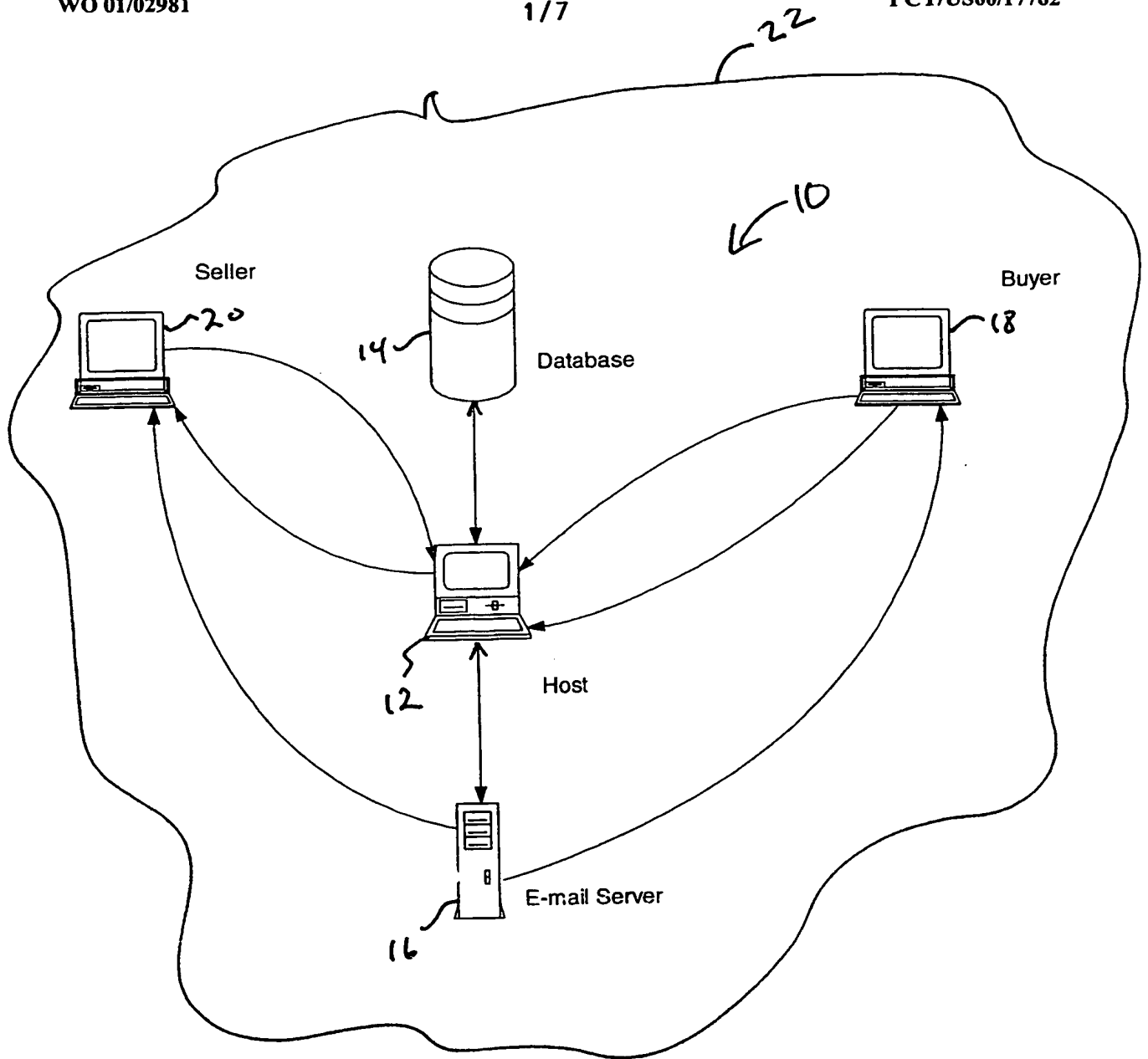


FIG. 1

2/7

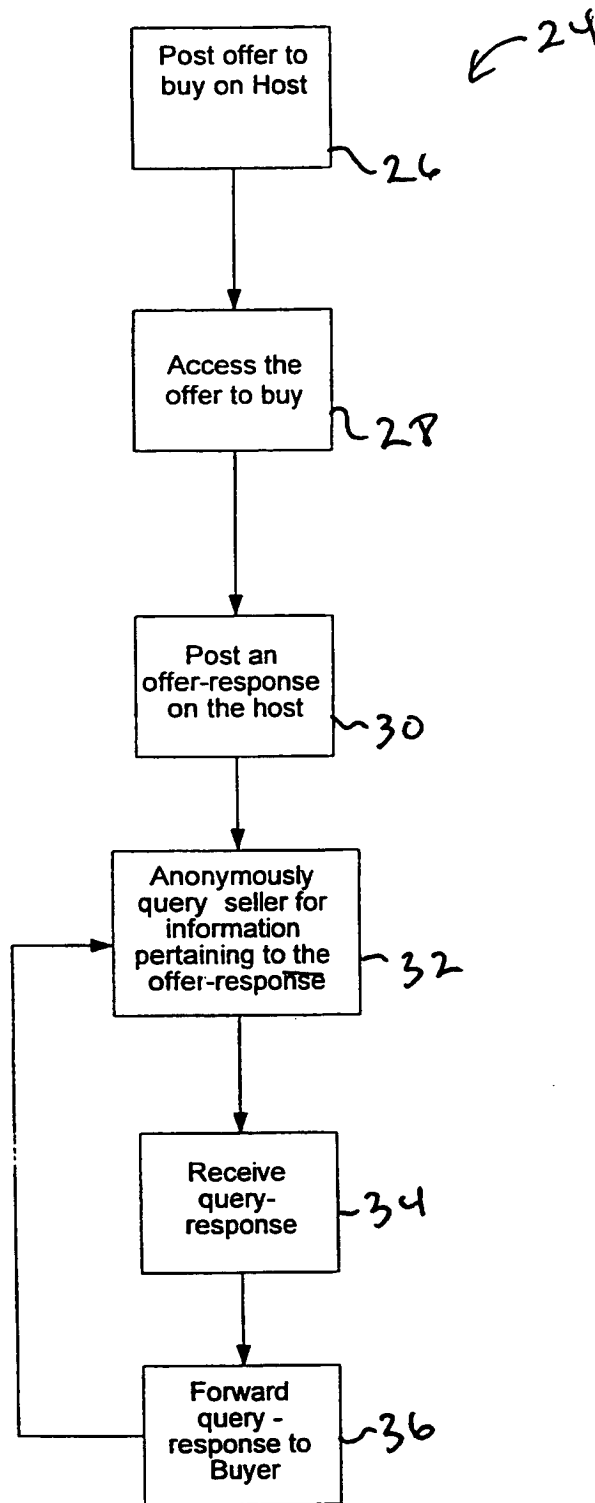


FIG. 2

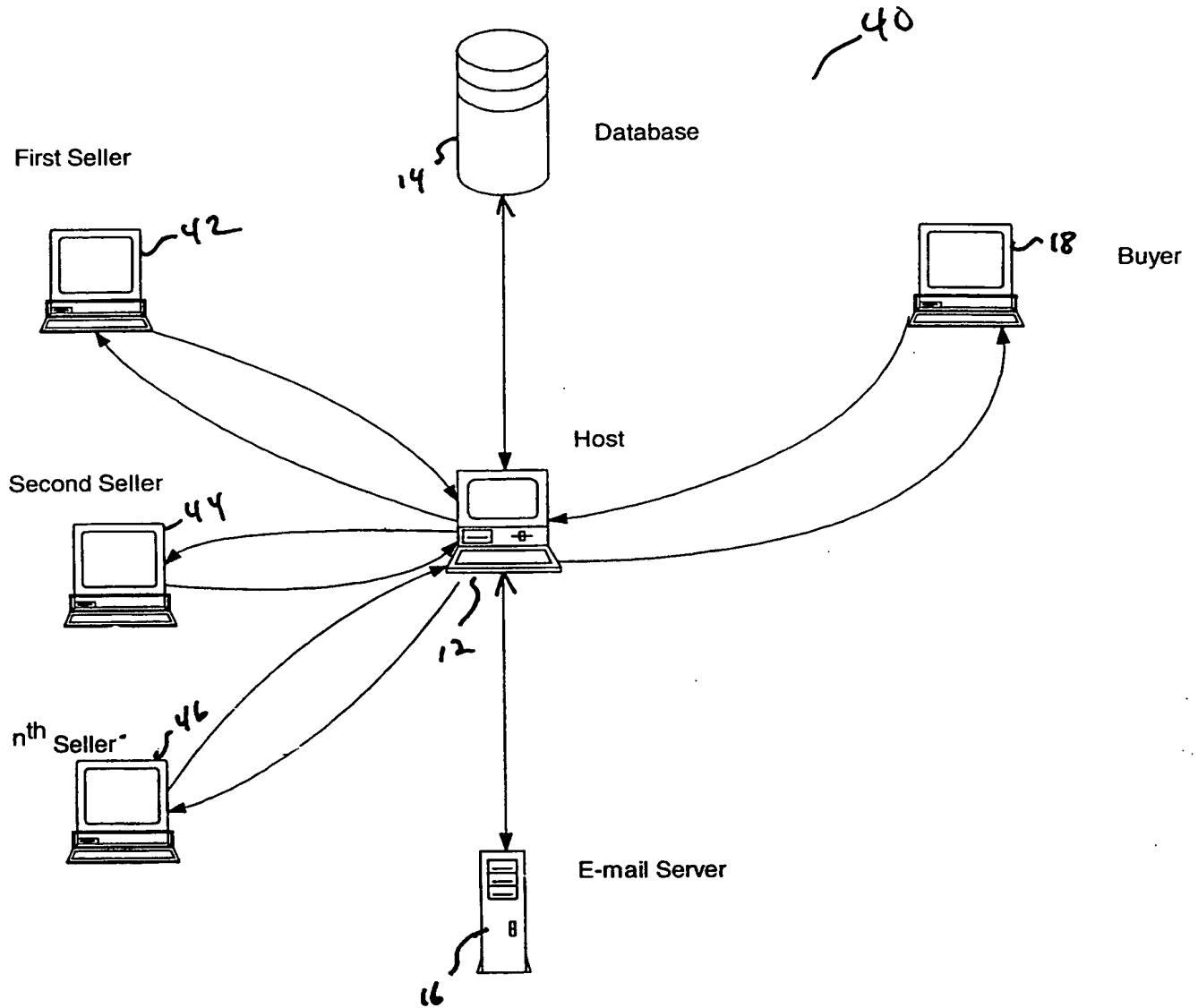
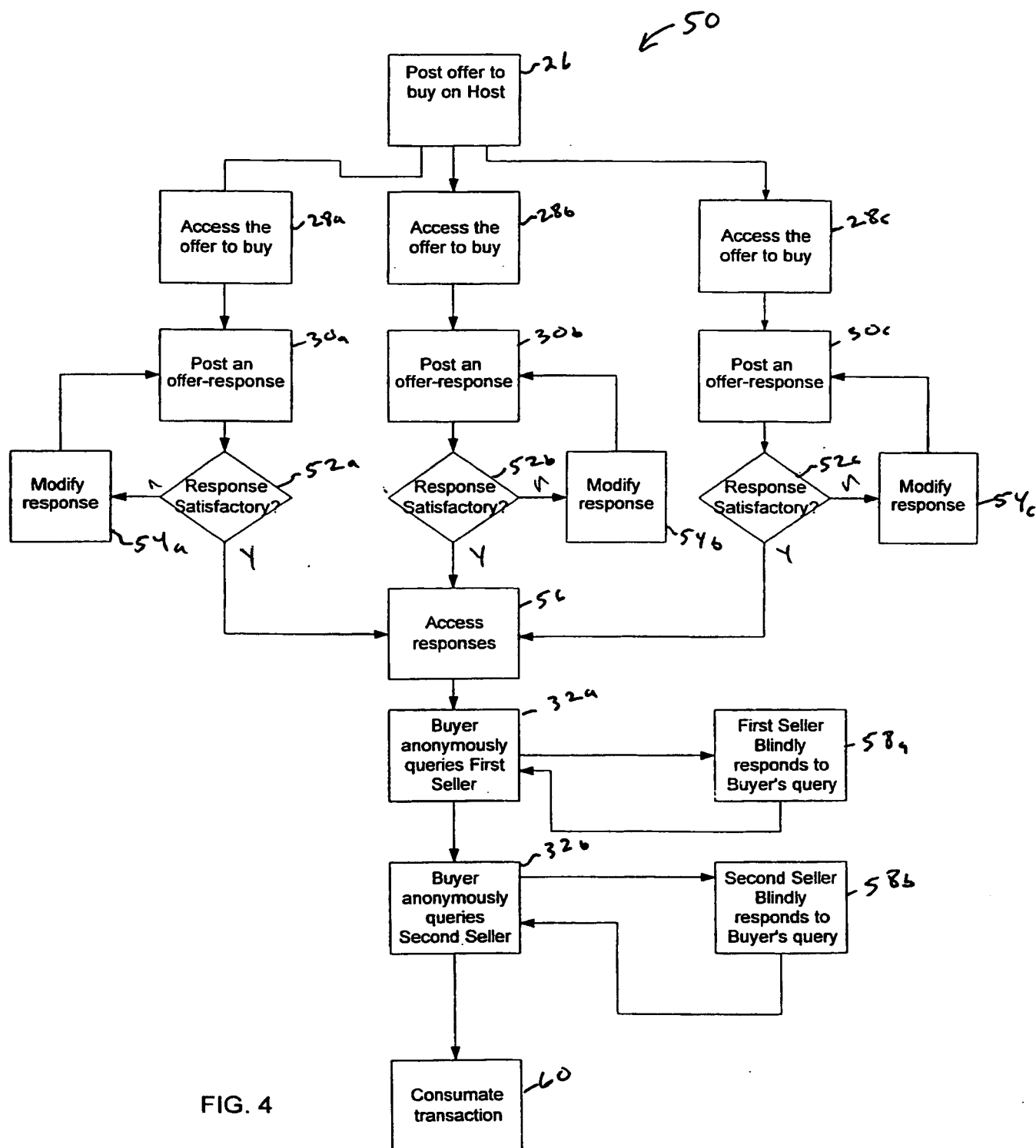


FIG. 3



eWanted™
Reversing the Rules you Buy With™

[Home](#) | [Register Free!](#) | [User Portfolio](#)

 **Browse**

 **Search**

 **Post**

 **Services**

 **Help**

 **Rewards**

Listing Form *continued.....*

Category: Air Craft:Aircraft:Propeller Engines

Offers Considered	<input type="radio"/> All offers	
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> All Offers Below Amount Limit of \$ <input type="text" value="10,000"/>	
	<input type="radio"/> Lowest Offer Below Amount Limit of \$ <input type="text"/>	
Pay Method	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> MC
	<input type="checkbox"/> American Express	<input type="checkbox"/> Discover
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cashier Check	<input type="checkbox"/> Wire Transfer
	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Check	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepay
	<input type="checkbox"/> I-Escrow	<input type="checkbox"/> COD
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financing	
Quantity	<input type="text" value="1"/> Unit (s)	
Who can make offers	<input type="radio"/> Private Party <input type="radio"/> Dealer Only <input checked="" type="radio"/> Both	
Item Condition	<input type="radio"/> Brand New <input type="radio"/> New/Open Box <input checked="" type="radio"/> Used/Second Hand <input type="radio"/> Does not matter	
When to close offer	Immediately After closing of Offers <input type="button" value="v"/>	
Shipping	<input type="checkbox"/> UPS	<input type="checkbox"/> FedEx
	<input type="checkbox"/> US Postal	<input type="checkbox"/> DHL
	<input type="checkbox"/> Freight Forwarding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Pickup
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others / See Description	
Image Upload	<input type="radio"/> URL <input checked="" type="radio"/> Upload	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="radio"/> URL <input checked="" type="radio"/> Upload	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="radio"/> URL <input checked="" type="radio"/> Upload	<input type="text"/>
Item Description	I would like a 70's vintage aircraft, single engine, two seats.	
<div style="text-align: right;"> <input type="button" value="Last Step"/> <input type="button" value="Clear Form"/> </div>		

FIG. 4a

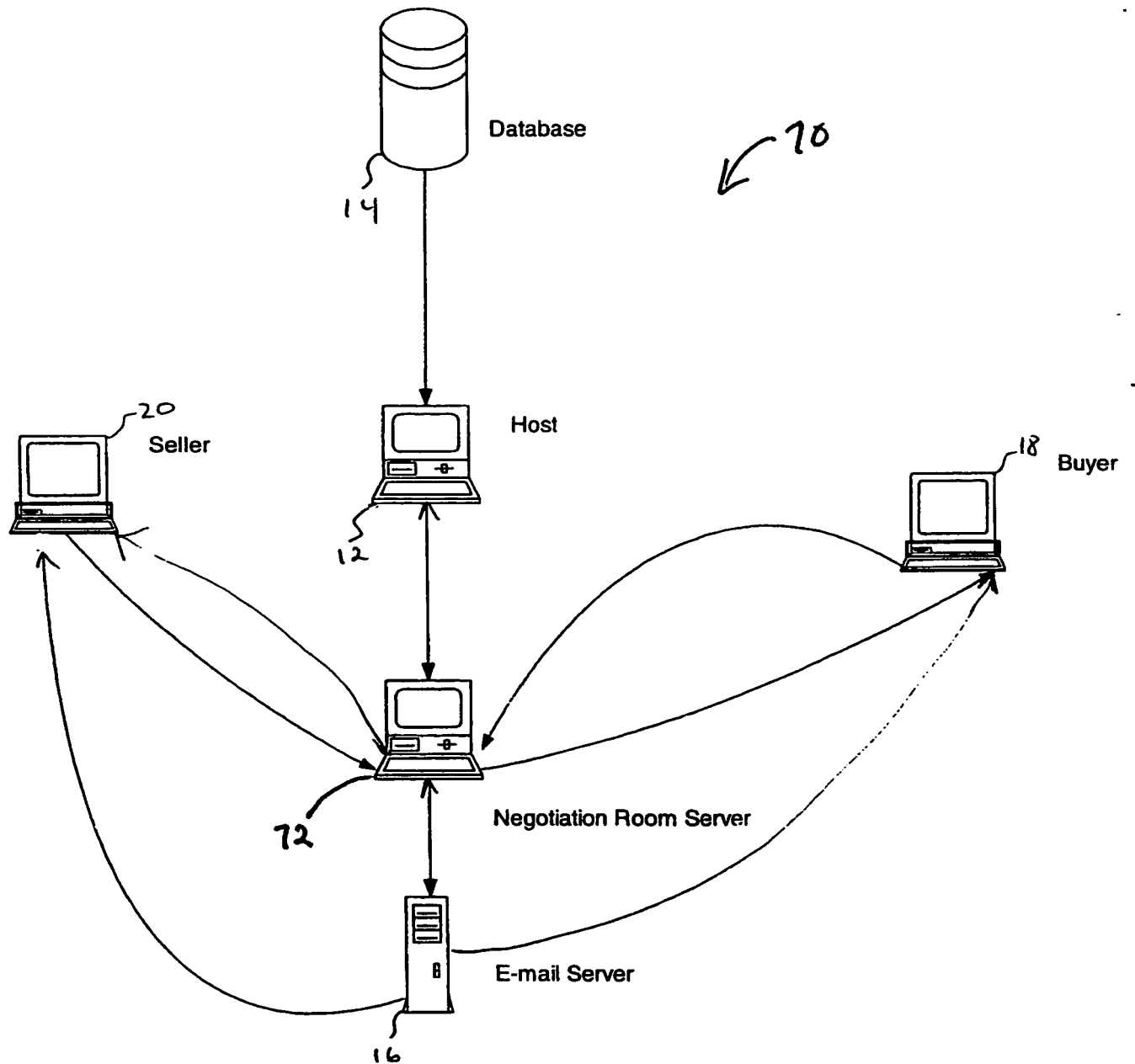


FIG. 5

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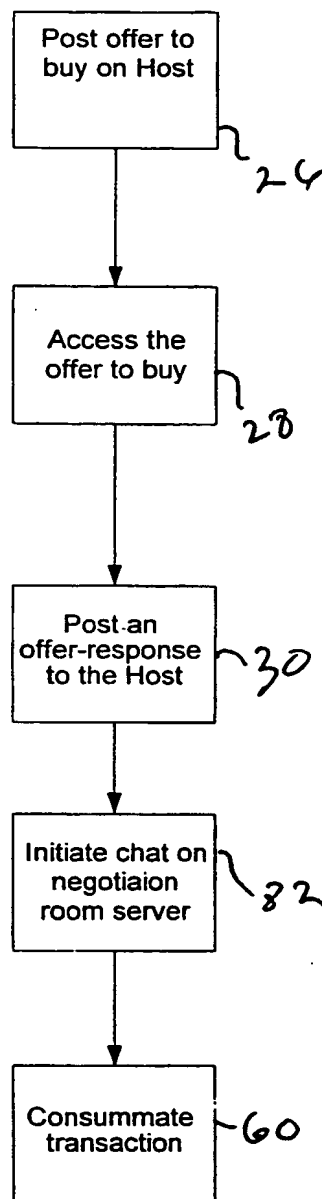
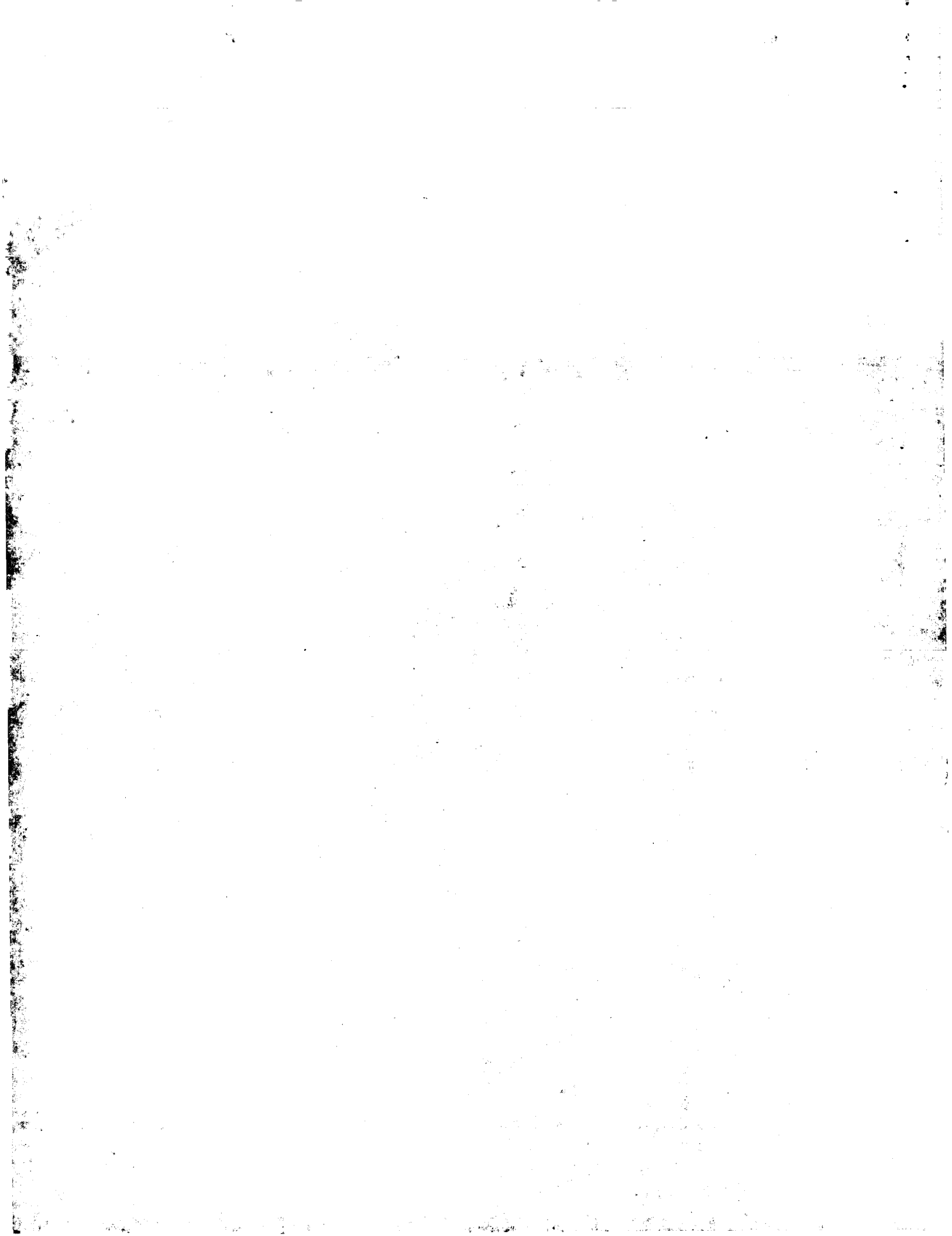


FIG. 6



REVISED VERSION

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BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES,

FI, GB, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP,
KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN,
MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK,
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PCT

DECLARATION OF NON-ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 17(2)(a), Rules 13ter.1(c) and Rule 39)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 001PCT	IMPORTANT DECLARATION	Date of mailing(day/month/year) 08/03/2001
International application No. PCT/US 00/ 17762	International filing date(day/month/year) 28/06/2000	(Earliest) Priority date(day/month/year) 06/07/1999
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC g06f17/60		
Applicant EWANTED.COM CORPORATION		


This International Searching Authority hereby declares, according to Article 17(2)(a), that **no international search report will be established** on the international application for the reasons indicated below

1. ☐ The subject matter of the international application relates to:
 - a. ☐ scientific theories.
 - b. ☐ mathematical theories
 - c. ☐ plant varieties.
 - d. ☐ animal varieties.
 - e. ☐ essentially biological processes for the production of plants and animals, other than microbiological processes and the products of such processes.
 - f. ☐ schemes, rules or methods of doing business.
 - g. ☐ schemes, rules or methods of performing purely mental acts.
 - h. ☐ schemes, rules or methods of playing games.
 - i. ☐ methods for treatment of the human body by surgery or therapy.
 - j. ☐ methods for treatment of the animal body by surgery or therapy.
 - k. ☐ diagnostic methods practised on the human or animal body.
 - l. ☐ mere presentations of information.
 - m. ☐ computer programs for which this International Searching Authority is not equipped to search prior art.
2. ☐ The failure of the following parts of the international application to comply with prescribed requirements prevents a meaningful search from being carried out:

<input type="checkbox"/> the description	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the claims	<input type="checkbox"/> the drawings
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3. ☐ The failure of the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing to comply with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions prevents a meaningful search from being carried out:

<input type="checkbox"/> the written form has not been furnished or does not comply with the standard.
<input type="checkbox"/> the computer readable form has not been furnished or does not comply with the standard.
4. Further comments:

see further info

Name and mailing address of the International Searching Authority  European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Lucia Van Pinxteren
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FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 203

The subject matter claimed falls under the provisions of Article 17(2)(a)(i) and Rule 39.1(iii), PCT, such subject-matter relating to a method of doing business.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure. If the application proceeds into the regional phase before the EPO, the applicant is reminded that a search may be carried out during examination before the EPO (see EPO Guideline C-VI, 8.5), should the problems which led to the Article 17(2) declaration be overcome.

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